

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1.-12. (canceled)

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for preventing unintentional discharge of a vehicle battery, said apparatus comprising:

a semiconductor safety switch interruptibly coupling said battery to electric consuming devices on said vehicle; and

a programmable control unit for opening and closing said semiconductor safety switch as a function of a monitored parameter; wherein,

said semiconductor safety switch is connected to selectively supply or interrupt electric power from said battery to an electric socket of said vehicle, for coupling said electric power to said consuming devices;

said semiconductor safety switch provides a bidirectional current flow capability, whereby said vehicle battery can be charged via the vehicle socket; [[and]]

said semiconductor safety switch is switchable between an operating state in which charging current is not allowed to flow to said battery, and an operating state in which charging current is allowed to flow to said battery;

~~when a voltage applied to one of an output of said semiconductor safety switch and an output of said battery exceeds a defined threshold value,~~ said semiconductor safety switch switches to said operating state in which allows a charging current is allowed to flow to said battery, in response to the application of a voltage to one of an output of said semiconductor safety switch and an output of said battery, which voltage exceeds a defined threshold value.

Claim 14. (New) Apparatus for preventing unintentional discharge of a vehicle battery, said apparatus comprising:

a semiconductor safety switch interruptibly coupling said battery to electric consuming devices on said vehicle; and

a programmable control unit for opening and closing said semiconductor safety switch as a function of a monitored parameter; wherein,

said semiconductor safety switch is connected to selectively supply or interrupt electric power from said battery to an electric socket of said vehicle, for coupling said electric power to said consuming devices;

said semiconductor safety switch provides a bidirectional current flow capability, whereby said vehicle battery can be charged via the vehicle socket;

said semiconductor safety switch is switchable between an operating state in which charging current is not allowed to flow to said battery, and an operating state in which charging current is allowed to flow to said battery; and

said control unit is programmable via a serial interface to cause said semiconductor safety switch to switch to said operating state in which a charging current is allowed to flow to said battery, in response to an activation from outside said vehicle via said serial interface.